

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 EUR-12 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-11 AID-05

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DRAFTED BY ARA/MRSD:JMO'GRADY:ZC

APPROVED BY ARA:WHLUERS

ARA/APU:JMSMITH

S/IL:MR. GOOD (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 081223

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, AR

SUBJECT: EMBASSY ASSESSMENT OF CASILDO HERRERAS AND AFL-CIO  
INVITATION TO US

REFERENCES: (A) BUENOS AIRES 2148; (B) MONTEVIDEO 1077

1. ON APRIL 1 DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERS DISCUSSED CASILDO HERRERAS' CASE WITH ANDREW MCLELLAN OF AFL-CIO. LUERS ASKED MCLELLAN FOR HIS REACTION TO REFTTEL (A) WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN DESCRIBED TO MCLELLAN BY ARA LABOR ADVISOR O'GRADY. MCLELLAN REPORTED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WAS SUFFICIENT GROUNDS NOW TO WITHDRAW HIS INVITATION TO HERRERAS, NOR WAS HE CONVINCED SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE AFL-CIO'S RELATIONS WITH THE ARGENTINE LABOR MOVEMENT. HE HAD NO COMMENT ON POTENTIAL  
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ADVERSE EFFECTS OF AFL-CIO ACTIONS ON USG RELATIONS WITH

THE GOA (HOWEVER, IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH O'GRADY HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE AFL-CIO WOULD NOT OPPOSE A GOA EX-TRADITION REQUEST IF IT HAD CGT BACKING).

2. MCLELLAN DOES NOT SHARE THE ASSESSMENT OF HERRERAS AS DISCREDITED LEADER WHO REFUSED TO ACCEPT LEADERSHIP RE-

SPONSIBILITIES AND WAS SERIOUSLY CENSURED BY ARGENTINE LABOR LEADERS FOR HIS "ESCAPE" TO URUGAY. HE DOES NOT KNOW WHO CONSTITUTE THE MAJORITY OF ARGENTINE LABOR LEADERS WHO ARE REPORTED TO HAVE MADE THESE CHARGES, BUT HE HAS GREAT CONFIDENCE IN SEVERAL OF THE CGT LEADERS WITH WHOM HE TALKED IN MONTEVIDEO. HE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED ELORZA, ALVAREZ, AND LOPEZ IN THIS CONNECTION, AND CLAIMED THAT ALL OF THEM HAD REFERRED TO HERRERAS AS THE UNDISPUTED LEADER OF THE CGT WHO HAD THE GUTS TO STAND UP TO LORENZO MIGUEL AND WHO HAD MADE THE DECISION NOT TO ORDER A GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST THE COUP. MCLELLAN FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THE LEADERS HE SAW IN MONTEVIDEO, WHO CAME FULLY DOCUMENTED AND ACCREDITED BY THE CGT AND WHO FURTHERMORE ARE TRUSTED PERSONAL FRIENDS OF LONG STANDING, WOULD HAVE DELIBERATELY MISLED HIM ABOUT HERRERAS.

3. MCLELLAN REITERATED THE REPORT IN REF (B) THAT THE CGT LEADERS WHO ACCOMPANIED HERRERAS IN THE MONTEVIDEO MEETINGS ASKED HIM TO INTERCEDE WITH URUGUAYAN AUTHORITIES OUT OF CONCERN FOR HERRERAS' SAFETY, AND THAT IT WAS FOR THIS REASON HE HAD TALKED TO COLONEL CARMELO BETANCUR. AT THAT TIME, APPARENTLY, CGT LEADERS SAW NO INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THIS ACTION AND THEIR EXPRESSED WISH THAT NO APPEALS BE MADE IN BEHALF OF ARRESTED CGT LEADERS. NOR, ACCORDING TO MCLELLAN, DID THEY IN ANYWAY SHOW CONCERN ABOUT THE FACT THAT HERRERAS WAS NOT RETURNING WITH THEM TO ARGENTINA.

4. MCLELLAN IS NOT DISTURBED BY HERRERAS' PERSONAL LIFE STYLE AND THE CORRUPTION THIS IMPLIES. HE SAID HE DOES NOT CONDONE CORRUPTION BUT THAT MANY ARGENTINE UNIONS WERE WEALTHY, EVEN IF THE CGT ITSELF WAS NOT. HE  
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SAID THAT EMBASSY HAD PROPOSED TO THE AFL-CIO THAT IT SUPPORT HERRERAS FOR A POSITION AS WORKER DELEGATE ON THE ILO GOVERNING BODY (A POST HE NOW OCCUPIES), WITH NO HINT THAT HE WAS SO NOTORIOUSLY CORRUPT.

5. COMMENT. WHILE MCLELLAN DID APPEAR SOMEWHAT ON DEFENSIVE ABOUT HERRERAS HE WAS, WE THINK, SOBERED BY THE EMBASSY'S CABLE. O'GRADY WILL FOLLOW UP WITH

MCLELLAN NEXT WEEK TO DETERMINE WHETHER AFL-CIO IS BE-  
COMING MORE CAUTIOUS ON HERRERAS.

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## Message Attributes

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